

BETTER TIMES

Produced monthly by AA members in the Greater Toronto

August 2019



85th ANNIVERSARY

International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous



Detroit, Michigan Ford Field Stadium will be the host city and location of the 2020 International Convention, the 85th of it's kind. The theme will be "Love and Tolerance is our Code." Alcoholics will join in unison, attending meetings Friday night, Saturday and Sunday morning in the Ford Field Stadium. The COBO Center in downtown Detroit will host other meetings both scheduled and impromptu.

Registration forms will be mailed in August 2019 to all Group Service Representatives, Central Offices, Intergroups and International Group Service Offices.

Look for more details as they become available. Online registration will be available September 9, 2019 at www.aa.org

REGISTER EARLY FOR DISCOUNTED PRICE!

- Registrations received between September 9, 2019 and April 14, 2020 will be \$115.00 USD per attendee.
- Registration after April 15, 2020 will be \$140.00 USD per attendee.
- For further information please see the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) .See you in Detroit!



Photos courtesy of Maija P.

WORD search



SUBMIT A BETTER TIMES ARTICLE!! Please send us in your own words, your ideas, your journey experience, strength and hope 100-500 words to bettertimes@aatoronto.org *

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Mary M. Better Times Editor

STEP 8 Last month's hidden word: HUMILITY

T	L	U	A	F	N	W	I	L	L	D	I	N	L	M
A	T	G	L	A	F	E	T	C	H	I	S	H	L	O
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ACCRATE
AMENDS
BACKWARD
BEING
CLEANED
DAMAGE
DEBRIS
DEGREE
DISCOVER
EFFORT

FAULT
FETCH
FOUND
HEADWAY
HUMAN
HURT
LARGE
LIST
LOOK
MORAL

ORDER
PATIENCE
PEACE
PERFORM
PERSONAL
REPAIR
REVEAL
SENSE
SKILL
START

STRAINED
SURVEY
TASK
WOUNDS

* Opinions expressed in BETTER TIMES are those of the authors and don't necessarily reflect those of the Greater Toronto Area Intergroup. The editorial staff reserve the right to edit submitted articles for length, content and grammar in accordance with layout and quality purposes.

Submit group news, medallions, other event notices, letters to the editor or articles to BETTER TIMES before the 7th of the month prior to the month of issue. Submissions should be 200 to 500 words by email to bettertimes@aatoronto.org

GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

votes against 5th edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*

The Big Book to remain as is (at least for now)

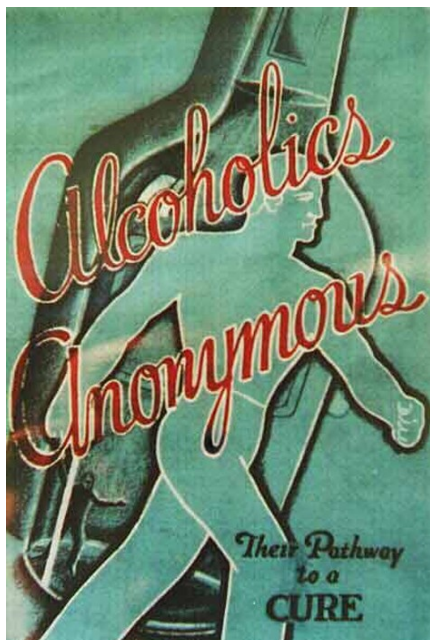
In a way like no other text, our Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, lives and grows. Ever since 1939 it has incorporated change to preserve currency. It reinvents itself for other cultures, in other languages, while remaining the same. This year celebrating 80 years, having sold more than 40 million copies, it's among the best-selling books of all time. New editions were released in 1955, 1976, and 2001.

A new edition is likely in the foreseeable future. This was a notable topic on the floor of the 69th General Service Conference (GSC) held this past May in New York. Panel 69 delegate Rob M. for Area 83, including the GTA, was in attendance and reported back at Information A.A. Day in Toronto on June 8, 2019

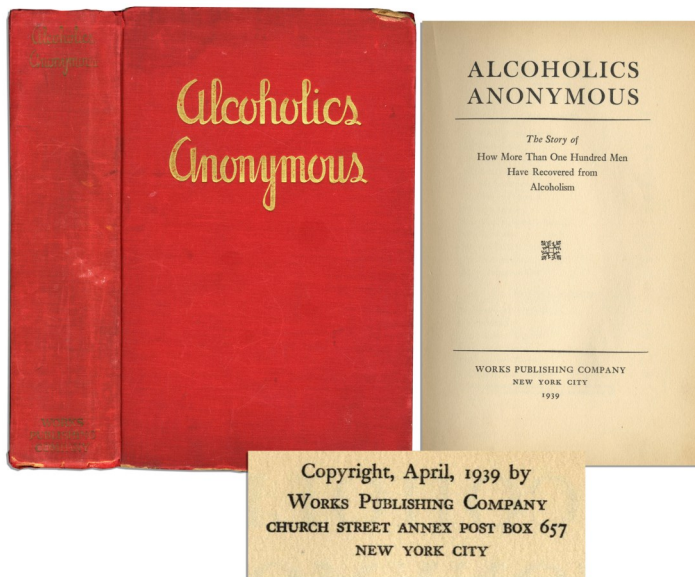
A recommendation from the literature standing committee for a draft fifth edition was included in this year's agenda and was discussed on the conference floor. The recommendation was defeated with 54 in favor and 78 opposed.

"This doesn't mean there will never be a fifth edition of the Big Book," explained Rob. "The people opposed to it weren't so much opposed to the idea—just the timing." With A.A.'s 85th anniversary convention taking place in 2020, along with the planned launch of a new website and new meeting app, it was decided that A.A. doesn't have resources enough right now to tackle something as significant as a new Big Book edition.

What might be new in a 5th edition? What has changed in the past has primarily been the stories in the back. The literature committee suggested including a new section of stories from individuals who got sober under the age of 25. A further recommendation, keeping with what's been done in the past, is that stories be gathered from as broad a cross-section of the fellowship as possible.



One of the first draft covers of the original Big Book



Feedback that Rob received from Area 83 was to add footnotes to the first 164 pages, the preface, the forewords, "The Doctor's Opinion", "Dr. Bob's Nightmare", and the appendices to address sexist, religious, and outdated language. "I was in line at the mic to share this feedback when someone in front of me raised the same point," said Rob.

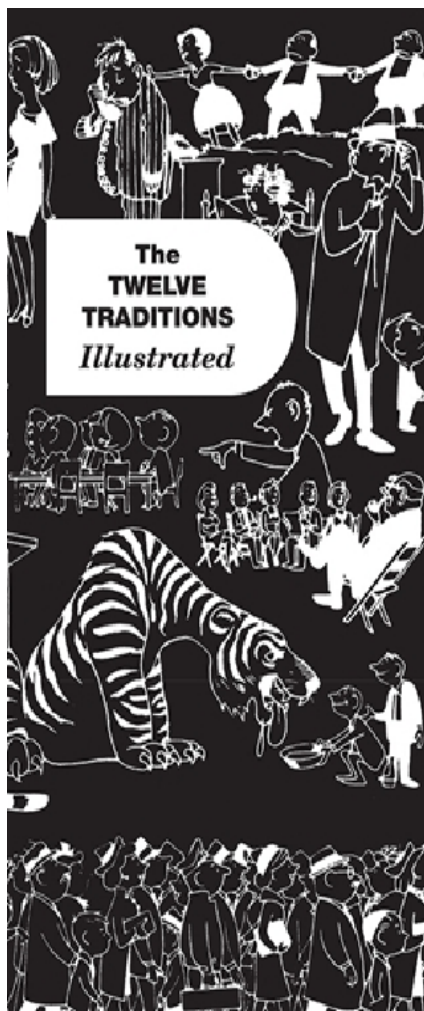
These ideas for the Big Book are currently in circulation within the fellowship, and even though the recommendation failed to pass, the topic's discussion will be recorded in the 2019 GSC final report.

What won't be new in a 5th edition? There was an advisory action passed in 1995 stating that the core text should remain as is. "I think our basic text is so revered by our members that any change wouldn't go over well," said Rob. "That's the idea with the footnotes." Problematic language could be given context, helping readers relate to the ideas: the newcomer in particular.

Change may be inevitable, but it will certainly happen slowly. The 4th edition started with a recommendation that passed at GSC in 1997 followed by four years of work and review. Rob said a 5th edition will be a similarly lengthy process including plenty of opportunity for feedback from groups.

Chris Z., Mississauga

AA CUSTOMS vs. TRADITIONS



AA Pamphlet # 43

AA meetings have often different customs such as having the whole group chant the Preamble or chant the Chapter five readings (*No peeking!*); some announce the readers names, but some simply say: "I have asked a friend to read" (How distant!); some impolitely mock the readings; Most rotate GSRs, Secretaries, Chairpersons, Treasurers, but some do not, etc. These rituals are up to each group's conscience. They do not adversely affect other groups or "AA as a whole" so said customs do not stand in conflict with [Tradition Four](#).

However, I believe it is important for me to recognize the difference between AA Customs and AA Traditions, e.g.: I recently attended a group where a non-AA member was chairing the meeting. This practice violates [Tradition One](#) (Divides group unity); [Tradition Five](#) (How can a non-alcoholic share their recovery from alcoholism if they do not have alcoholism); [Tradition Ten](#) (As an AA group we have no opinion on over-eating, drug addiction, sex addiction, etc. or whatever addiction the non-alcoholic chairperson may have). I believe [Tradition Four](#) is violated when it conflicts with any of the other of the Twelve Traditions.

What **not** to do: A two-year sober member—who seemed to be hanging on by the skin of his teeth—was shouted at publicly during the meeting for mentioning another member's last name. This mild mannered man of past retirement age didn't come back the next week or month, but he did return some months later to take a new beginner's token, but again disappeared. His body was found in a room surrounded by whisky bottles shortly thereafter.

I believe Tradition violations need be explained privately after the meeting. A newcomer who was celebrating his first year told as how he was looking forward for AA to change its name to Addictions Anonymous. I spoke to him softly after the meeting, albeit to deaf ears, but perhaps what I said may sink in later. Rather than explain what I think about the Twelve Traditions, I find it better to suggest reading about them in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* and in *AA Comes of Age*.

I believe it is important to stand up for our Traditions — not stop going to a meeting where they are being violated—but much tact is in order in so doing. **Bob S.**

DIRECTION

The dilemma in my life has not been of a weak will
Lost in a quandary life was always full of cold chill
In the haze of the world's pressures what I needed was DIRECTION
Being utterly different from my fellows the path was headed towards self-destruction

At the mercy of my misery, the vision had to come from somewhere
I then realized that the captain of my ship has been patiently waiting for me to share
One day a noble man came to help relieve me from my pain
The journey has not been the same since that day's hard rain

Although the currents of the water still trouble me at times
But I have put my life in the hands of my creator to refine
Under his guidance I can never suffer defeat
Even if the world's problems become hard to meet

Sometimes my wickedness takes over to command the ship
Only to feel anguish and I quickly remember that good chaps friendly tip
He said young man when self-reliance fails you again and it will
Simply leave your troubles and dreams under the DIRECTION of God to fulfill

Gagan S., Erin Mills Group



FROM THE ARCHIVES; did you know?

Eddy G. – GTA Archivist

1. Aug. 8, 1879 AA's Cofounder Dr. Bob is born in St. Johnsbury, Vermont?
2. Aug. 1934 Rowland H. and Cebra G. persuade a Vermont court to parole Ebby T. into their custody? The presiding judge was Cebra's father Collins G.
3. Aug. 1934 Ebby T. Bill W.'s school friend & sponsor, sobers up for 2 years?
4. Aug. 1935 Bill W. returns to NYC from Akron and meetings were held at his house at 182 Clinton St. on Tuesday nights?
5. Aug. 1937 Bill & Lois stopped attending Oxford Group meetings & the NY AA's separated from the Oxford Group?
6. Aug. 1938 the Alcoholic Foundation was created as a charitable trust with a board of 5 Trustees (3 non-alcoholics & 2 alcoholics)?
7. Aug. 2, 1939 Dr. Bob & Sister Ignatia start work at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron? On Aug. 16, Sister Ignatia arranged for the first AA admission, Walter B., at the request of Dr. Bob. They treat 5,000 cases in the next 10 years.
8. Aug. 1942 the AA Office in New York granted distribution rights for the Big Book to Dr. George Little? Dr. Little formally transferred these rights to the Toronto AA Club on Sept. 22, 1944.
9. Aug. 1945 the Grapevine carried Bill W.'s first article titled "Modesty One Plank for Good Public Relations"? It set the groundwork for Bill's 5-year campaign for the Traditions.
10. Aug. 16, 1948 a permanent secretary, Marg Meekwas hired for the Central Committee (today GTA Intergroup) in Toronto? The office was at 331 Bay St. Marg held the position for 25 years.
11. Aug. 1950 Dr. Bob gave Bill W. his endorsement of the idea for the General Service Conference?
12. Aug. 29, 1955 Bill W. joined with Aldous Huxley and took LSD in California under the guidance of Gerald Heard and Sidney Cohen? Others invited to experiment (and who accepted) were Nell Wing, Father Ed Dowling, Sam Shoemaker & Lois. Marty M. & Helen W. also participated in New York.
13. Aug. 2-4, 1968 the 11th International Conference of Young People in AA (ICYPAA) was held at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto?
14. Aug. 6, 1981 the 1st meeting of the Archives Committee was set up by representatives from Ontario Provincial Committee (OPC) the four Areas in Ontario & Toronto Intergroup? In 1991 Toronto Intergroup becomes the sole sponsor of the Archives Committee.
15. Aug. 18-21, 1988 the 1st Canadian National AA Convention was held in Halifax in an attempt to make it a regular 5 year Canadian event? Did not work out too well. Two 7th Traditions had to be requested in order to make it pay for itself.
16. Aug. 3, 1993 Toronto Intergroup Offices at 234 Eglinton Ave. E. moved down from 502 to 202? Done for financial reasons. Money was short at Intergroup & the smaller space lowered the rent substantially.
17. Aug. 1981 distribution of Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book) passes the 3 million mark?

**TO DONATE AA/GTA ARCHIVAL ITEMS TO THE GTA ARCHIVES PLEASE
CONTACT THE GTA ARCHIVIST EDDY G. at 416-536-7536
OLD GTA MEETING BOOKS ARE NEEDED FOR THE GTA ARCHIVES**



When I came to trust that Alcoholics Anonymous could repair my life and help restore me to sanity I dove full in, as far as I knew. I was of service to my home group, greeting, making coffee and opening the meetings and closing them too. Chairs, tables and all that good stuff. Some years went by. I did my Steps and rode the roller coaster of early sobriety. Life was great, wonderful and I moved on and met a lady. Don't cringe. I moved to Toronto and we've been together for over 15 years. I got real sober but at times something was missing. Sometimes I felt down and I thought there must be more.

Since that time I learned about service outside of my group. I became the

Intergroup rep for a couple of years, alternate and then one day a friend nominated me to become the Group Service Rep. I was afraid. Could I do this? I attended my first meeting with my outgoing GSR and learned the ropes so to speak and did a year, and now two Area Assemblies under my belt and I have the bug. The Service Bug. I have a service sponsor and am fully living in AA. Still GSR for another two years and took on more duties for my District and Intergroup. It keeps me busy. It keeps me sober. I find I'm doing things, refining my writing and listening skills again. I'm still happy to be alive, in Alcoholics Anonymous and above all, sober. That, I find, is what it's all about. Grateful.

We need more people to try the waters of service. Check the Toronto Intergroup website, www.aatoronto.org and below. Attend a meeting that may appeal to you. Stick your toe in. You may find yourself grateful also. **Peter McC.**

SERVICE COMMITTEES

ACCESS ABILITY AA as a whole defines AA's with special needs as persons who are blind, visually impaired, have limited mobility, deaf or hard of hearing, chronically ill or homebound, and those with limited reading abilities or facing language barriers. [Read More](#)

ARCHIVES Alcoholics Anonymous quietly arrived in Canada, Toronto, Ontario, on January 13th, 1943. The first meeting was held without fanfare at the Little Denmark Restaurant, located on the west side of Bay Street between Gerrard and College Streets. [Read More](#)

COMMUNICATIONS The Greater Toronto Area Website, and The Better Times Newsletter (Produced Monthly for AA Members in the Greater Toronto Area). [Read More](#)

CORRECTIONAL The Correctional Committee of Greater Toronto Area Intergroup is responsible for supplying Chairpersons, Speakers, and Literature for A.A. Meetings at correctional centers, jails, detention centers, probation centers and similar institutions. [Read More](#)

COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY Purpose is to carry the message to professionals and students in professional schools, to understand how and why AA works. [Read More](#)

FINANCE The Finance Subcommittee is responsible for the financial soundness and well-being of the operations of the Intergroup Office. [Read More](#)

INFORMATION A.A. DAY This event is put on to demonstrate how alcoholics in this great program can become active (or more active) in the fellowship. [Read More](#)

ONTARIO REGIONAL CONFERENCE The ORC is an annual event that has its roots in the late 1940's, when AA's began gathering annually in Toronto for Regional Meetings and Conferences, ten of which took place at the Harbour Castle Hotel. [Read More](#)

EXECUTIVE The Operating Committee of GTA Intergroup is composed of 10 members of AA, 9 of whom are elected from the Intergroup Representatives of the AA Groups from 9 service Districts in the GTA. [Read More](#)

PUBLIC INFORMATION (PI) The mandate of the Public Information Committee is to act as the liaison between the public and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Greater Toronto Area with the goal of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. [Read More](#)

TREATMENT The purpose of a Treatment Committee is to coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment facilities, and to set up a means of "bridging the gap" from the facility to the larger A.A. community. [Read More](#)

AUGUST 2019 MEDALLIONS

#	NAME	YEARS	DRY DATE	GROUP	MEDALLION
1	Andrew A.	15	Jul. 31 2004	Mount Royal - York Discussion Group	Aug. 6 2019
2	Bob T.	5	Jul. 14 2014	Traditional Group	Aug. 9 2019
3	Lynda M.	1	Aug. 8 2018	Erin Mills Group	Aug. 12 2019
4	Ray C.	10	Aug. 13 2009	Westmoreland Group	Aug. 13 2019
5	Gagan S.	20	Aug. 18 1999	Erin Mills Group	Aug. 19 2019
6	Zach R.	1	Aug 12 2018	Friendly Group	Aug. 19 2019
7	Peter G.	25	Aug. 15 1994	Anniversary Group	Aug. 21 2019
8	Megan L.	1	Aug. 21 2018	Anniversary Group	Aug. 28 2019
9	Chris Z	10	Aug. 31 2009	Port Credit Group	Aug. 31 2019

The GTA Archives Committee invites you to attend the

35th Annual GTA Archives Breakfast Sunday November 3, 2019

Oasis Convention Centre
(1036 Lakeshore Rd. E., Mississauga)

9am-1pm, Tickets \$25

9am – Coffee | 10am – Breakfast | 11am – Open Speaker Meeting
Door Prizes, Raffle Tickets



Come join us for a fantastic breakfast, fellowship,
and hear what it was like from one of our long-timers

For Tickets Contact:

SecretaryGTAarchives@gmail.com

"Whenever a society or civilization perishes there is always one condition present; they forgot where they came from."
- Carl Sandburg.

23rd Annual Mississauga Fall Roundup

Saturday October 5th 2019

Vic Johnston Community Centre Banquet Hall

335 Church Street Mississauga Ontario

Rigorously Honest

Featured Speakers:

AA Speaker: Adam T. from Los Angeles, California

AA Speaker: Jennifer K. from Plano, Texas

AA Speaker: Steven P. from Peterborough Ontario

Al-Anon Rick J. from Oakville, Ontario

Alateen Speaker: TBA

- Plenty of free parking
 - Close to Streetsville GO
 - Accessible by Transit
- 8 AM – Registration & Coffee
9 AM – Program Starts
3 PM – Program Ends

Tickets are \$20 and will be sold at various groups and online by
sending an email to mississaugafallroundup@gmail.com

TICKETS WILL NOT BE SOLD AT THE DOOR

Morning Timbits, Coffee, Tea all day and Hot and Cold Buffet Lunch included

50/50 draw tickets will be sold at the event

Go to www.MississaugaFallRoundUp.org for more information

GROUP SPOTLIGHT

The [Restoration and Recovery Discussion](#) (R&R) group has been proudly serving the AA community since it formed 24 years ago in 1995. We are located in District 6, at the [St. Thomas A Becket Anglican Church](#) near South Common Mall in Mississauga.

One of the few Friday night meetings in west Mississauga. Perfect Friday night open speaker meeting, with a multitude of speakers from all over the GTA and Ontario. Beautiful modern church setting, numerous pamphlets, literature and newcomer information. Common Friday night meeting for long-timers. We offer subsidized and we donate Big Books free of charge to those newcomers who can't afford them. We have regular snacks, cookies, and coffee/tea all provided through our group contributions. Our members help each other both inside and outside the rooms. Our group members are all closely connected, and we spend time with each other going for coffee, talking about the steps, and supporting each other through life challenges, distributing service work accordingly. We have a combination of old and young members, making it a diverse and unique group filled with love and laughter, and most importantly acceptance for all.



R&R closed meetings are Tuesday afternoon's at 1:30pm. We read from the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions book, followed by popcorn-style sharing on the material read. We get long-timers and at least one newcomer every week. Afternoon meeting is great for retirees, and individuals who don't work during the day. Our Tuesday closed meeting is the only one of it's kind held on a Tuesday afternoon in the west end of Mississauga.

R&R's open speaker meetings are Friday at 8:00pm, and we aim to have a combination of local and out-of-town speakers. All our meetings are wheelchair accessible, as well we accommodate those with children, special needs and visual impairments. There are numerous opportunities for service available! You do not need to be a group member to chair a meeting. We are looking for an Intergroup Liaison, Group Chairperson, and Secretary. Our Group Anniversary and Christmas parties are famous! We always cook a big turkey and have a full buffet dinner for our group Christmas party.

The group's location has ample parking, and is right beside public transit, the South Common bus terminal, which covers transit from Oakville, Brampton and Mississauga. Hope to see you there!

David C. R&R group



Jim A. Erin Mills Group

THREE LEGACIES

A small service group in Streetsville (part of Mississauga) celebrated one year of serving the AA community within the community! AA members need to do service as a part of our recovery, not because we have so much time on our hands. It is essential to our well-being. Doing the steps (recovery) is crucial with no timetable adjoined. Do the steps as quickly or as slowly as you like, and as often as needed throughout your journey BUT DO THE STEPS! Stay connected with your fellow AA members and groups are run in accordance with the traditions. The open speaker meeting here begins with a members interpretation of the three legacies held Sunday's at 8 p.m. at [Trinity Church](#) Come on out and support this little group